

How Sweet it isn't

Duxbury lacrosse coach's contract not renewed

By Ryan Wood
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Duxbury School Committee Chairman George Cipolletti confirmed Wednesday morning that Duxbury boys lacrosse head coach Chris Sweet's contract has not been renewed for next season. Cipolletti said that the decision to not renew Sweet's contract was made by either Duxbury High School Principal Andrew Stevens and/or Duxbury High School Athletic Director Thom Holdgate.

"The decision to renew or not renew is basically made by the athletic director or the principal," Cipolletti said. "The superintendent does not have much to do with it unless there is some sort of discipline problem."

Cipolletti said he learned "a couple weeks ago" that Sweet's contract had not been renewed. He also cleared up a lot of speculation that has been circling around town.

"I think it's important that everybody knows that there was no indication of anything about inappropriate behavior or anything like that, to my knowledge, or that you'd be worried about Chris' behavior," he said. When asked why Sweet had formally been notified by Stevens or Holdgate about this, Cipolletti said, "I imagine nothing will happen with (Stevens or Holdgate) back on the job (at the running of the school)," he

said he had his annual evaluation a couple weeks ago. Holdgate, a process that coach goes through each year based on the fact that Duxbury High School athletic directors are on a year-to-year basis, according to Sweet.

"I sat in on my evaluation with the AD (Holdgate), and I had an excellent evaluation," said Sweet, who this spring led Duxbury to its sixth straight state lacrosse championship and seventh overall during his tenure with the team. "And then, normally after the evaluation, there's a recommendation, and nothing was marked. They did not give me any formal indication on what direction they were going in at the time. I walked out of the evaluation not knowing what the situation was. In that meeting, there was no indication of any misconduct whatsoever. I walked out of it confused. I'm still waiting for a more formal indication from the school. I'm hoping to be coach-

ing at Duxbury next spring. I'm hoping they renew my contract. I really hope they do."

This year, the Duxbury High School boys lacrosse team beat St. John's Prep, 13-12, in the Division 1 state title game, becoming the first team in Massachusetts boys lacrosse history to win six straight Division 1 lacrosse championships.

"Coach (Tony) Fisher and I did the best job coaching we ever had," Sweet said. "I've fielded a lot of calls and e-mails, not only asking what's going on, but I've received tremendous support from both inside and outside of the community. My hope is they reconsider the decision they made. I don't sign the coach's contract until the spring, so there's a lot of time to reconsider the decision they

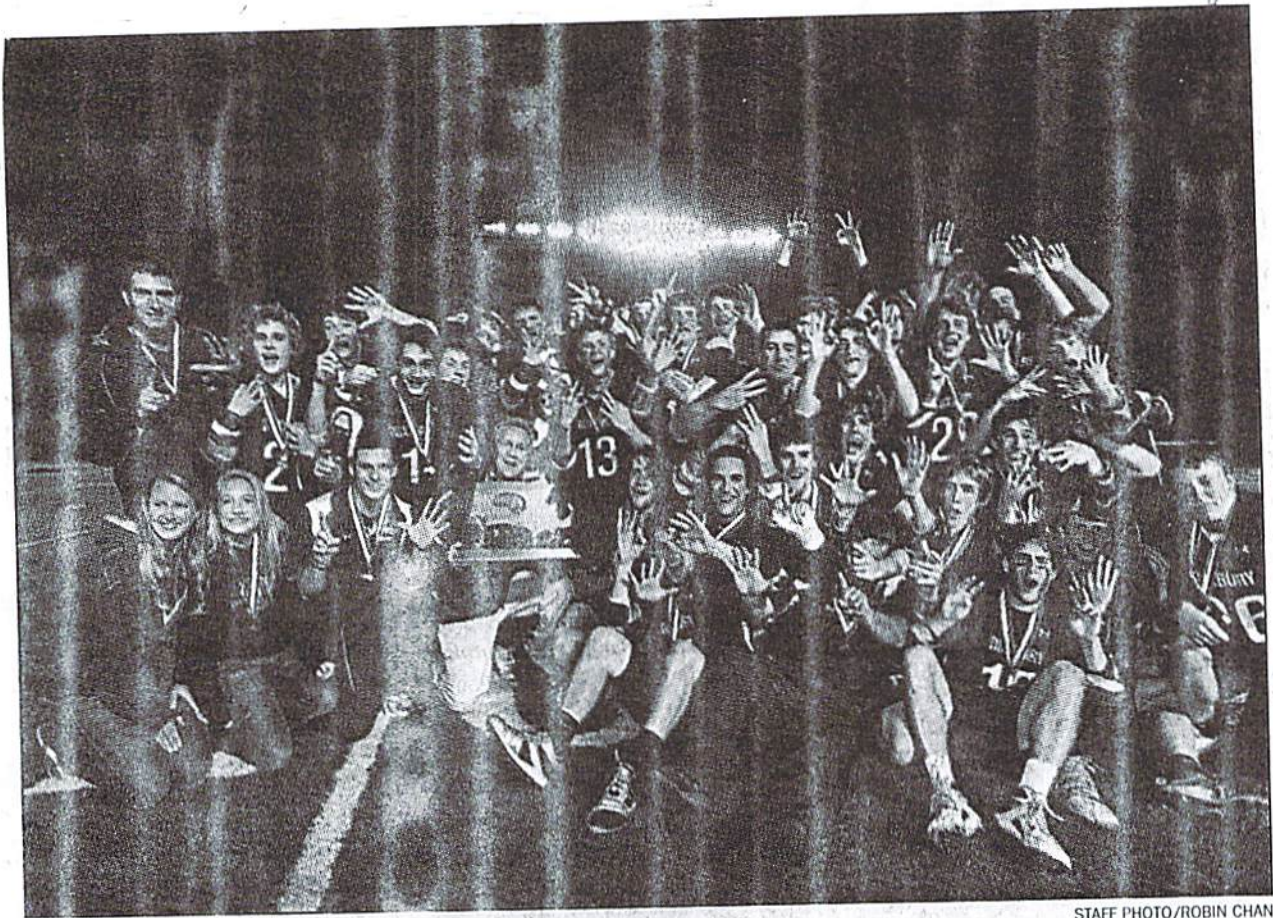
made. That's what I'm hoping." Sweet said even though the lacrosse season ended in mid-June, one of the busiest times for lacrosse coaches is now.

"This time of year, it's busy for the seniors who are being recruited by colleges," he said. "It puts me into a bit of a strange spot because they say, 'Hey Chris, what's going on?' My obligation is for the players and acting on behalf of them. I would do this regardless, but the writing in the coach's handbook is to assist players. So technically my contract runs from the beginning of the season to the end of the season, but I'm fielding calls on the scheduling games for next year from teams in and out of state. So that's all up in the air. In the meantime, I'm acting in that capacity."



STAFF PHOTO/MARK GARDNER

The Duxbury community comes out in droves to support Duxbury High School lacrosse.



STAFF PHOTO/ROBIN CHAN

Duxbury High School Head Coach Chris Sweet, center, holding trophy, learned two weeks ago that his contract would not be renewed, but has not received a formal notification from the school.